

Thomas Jefferson to John Armstrong, February 14, 1806, The Works of Thomas Jefferson in Twelve Volumes. Federal Edition. Collected and Edited by Paul Leicester Ford.

TO THE U. S. MINISTER TO FRANCE J. MSS. (JOHN ARMSTRONG.)

Washington, Feb. 14, 1806.

Dear Sir, —Mr. Skipwith will inform you what a terrible tempest has been excited against you by an opinion said to have been given by you in the case of the *New Jersey* & a letter of yours on that subject published in the papers. The body of merchants & insurers of New York have presented an address, the object of which tho' not expressed, cannot be mistaken, & it is expected their example will be followed by the other cities making common cause. I inclose you the answer of N. York, from which you will perceive the expediency on your own account as well as the public, to send a statement of the case, the points on which it is decided, and how your opinion happened to be given in that stage of the business, with documents to establish such facts as are not known. The hope is further, that in the business confided to you by this conveyance you may be able to obtain a success which may place you where you wish to be in the public favor. There are several circumstances at this time which you may so use as to produce favorable dispositions in the party with which you are to negotiate. 1. The law prohibiting intercourse with St. Domingo, which could not of right be demanded from us. 2. A second law to render the first more effectual in the main point by prohibiting the exportation of military stores to any part of America. These two laws will be passed in time to go by this conveyance. 3. The measures which will be explained to you for procuring a solid establishment of neutral rights. 4. Measures which will be taken to exclude British

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commerce from the U. S. in a great degree. 5. An effective navigation act. We cannot yet say what will be the precise form of the two last; but they will unquestionably be effectual. Considering the accidents which may happen to this by the way, it is not signed. That is unnecessary for your information that it comes from one whose friendship & respect to you are real.